

**CALEXICO CITY COUNCIL
STAFF REPORT**

SUBJECT:

Request authorization to hire one Police Officer now, and to begin testing to establish an eligibility list for other police officer vacancies to be filled after July 1, 2009.

ITEM PREPARED BY: Jim Neujahr, Chief of Police

ITEM APPROVED BY: Ralph Velez, City Manager 

AGENDA DATE: May 19, 2009

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval of the hiring of one Police Officer now, and for the Police Department to begin testing to establish an eligibility list for other police officer vacancies to be filled after July 1, 2009.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The new hire Police Officer would be hired at an entry step lower than the Senior Police Officer salary that was paid previously.

Due to the current fiscal situation, a necessary hiring freeze has been placed on City departments to reduce spending. Since the implementation of the hiring freeze, the Police Department has lost five (5) Police Officers who have sought employment elsewhere. In addition to the vacant police officer positions, we also have a Police Officer on long term disability leave, one Police Officer on military service in Iraq, and one Police Officer on disciplinary leave. In addition to these eight vacancies, the department has two frozen positions in this fiscal year budget.

The Police Department is very short of personnel and must hire at least one Police Officer now. We would ask to fill the other vacant police officer positions but there are no funds in the budget. The process for hiring a new Police Officer or to establish an eligibility list can take 3 to 4 months, in addition to the minimum 16 weeks of field training for officers with prior experience. The Police Department has submitted a grant application for a federal stimulus hiring grant. This grant, if approved, would pay for four new police officers' salaries for three years.

In order to fill existing vacancies, as well as the possible vacancies should we be approved for the hiring grant, the Police Department needs to begin testing now in order to have candidates for the vacant positions on July 1, 2009. In the event that the budget situation changes and more cuts are necessary or we are not approved for the hiring grant, we will suspend the list and no hiring will be done.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED: None